

VZCZCXRO5722
OO RUEHTRO
DE RUEHRB #0538 1621739
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 101739Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8694
INFO RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 4814
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 0565
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 0734
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 0329
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 9649
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 4141

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 000538

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/09/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SY](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: MOROCCO: NO ASAD VISIT, MORE SUPPORT NEEDED FOR
LEBANON

REF: A. DAMASCUS 404
[1](#)B. STATE 061438

Classified By: Polcouns Craig Karp for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) In a June 10 meeting with poloffs, Amb. Mohammed Azeroual, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director-General for Multilateral Affairs said there was currently no indication that Syrian President Bashar Asad would be visiting Morocco. He noted that as of June 10, Asad was in Tripoli, along with several North African heads of state. Morocco was being represented at the gathering by Prime Minister Abbas El-Fassi.

[1](#)2. (C) Azeroual confirmed that Morocco, and he in particular, had been instrumental during the negotiation of the Doha agreement. For several nights he worked side by side with Qatari FM Hamed Bin Jassem to mediate among the Lebanese factions represented. He characterized the outcome agreement as a good step, but opined that Lebanon needed more outside efforts to help strengthen the Lebanese government. The key longterm goal was to strengthen the writ and capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces and dismantle Hizballah as an autonomous military force which acts as a "state within a state."

[1](#)3. (C) Azeroual downplayed the GOM's ability to pressure Syria on full implementation of the Doha Agreement, wryly commenting "it is not that simple for us to just tell him to please fully implement UNSCR 1701."

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